

HONORING MR. CEDRIC GARDNER

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 14, 2015

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, Cedric Gardner is a John F. Kennedy 9th grade student of Mound Bayou, Mississippi and is a very diligent young student who is committed to learning and being an outstanding athlete.

Prior to joining the Hornets football, baseball, basketball, cross country and track athletic programs, Cedric participated in numerous community athletic activities. Starting in 2006, he played in the Mound Bayou Mississippi Little League and Cleveland Mississippi Park Commission athletic programs.

He was selected to be included in the 2011 edition of the United States Specialty Sports Association baseball. In 2012 he was one to be selected to participate in the Down Under Sports for Cross Country Runners and participated in the World Series for youth in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Even with facing prejudice, Cedric helped lead the John F. Kennedy's Cross Country team in winning their 1 A Title in 2014.

Besides being an athlete, Cedric is also a member of The Future Business Leaders of America, Wander's Home Baptist Choir and Sunday School Records Clerk, as well as, playing the drums.

Cedric is exciting, loveable and down to earth and loves to teach young youth athletics. He will always greet you with a handshake, hug or a smile. He made it his life's mission to continue the legacy of his late cousin, Coach Sank Powe, help others and encourage them that you can do anything you set your mind to.

Cedric has decided, when he graduates in high school 2018, he will continue his education at The University of Oregon. He plans on becoming a professional Baseball Player or Coach/ Teacher.

Cedric is the son of Tabithia Gardner and his motto is: "Stay positive and always believe in yourself."

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing an amazing student.

INTRODUCTION OF THE EQUAL
RIGHTS AMENDMENT

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 14, 2015

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, it has been forty-three years since Congress passed the Equal Rights Amendment (also known as the Women's Equality Amendment). This historic amendment is intended to enshrine in our United States Constitution fundamental equality based on sex in all areas of society.

In 1972, Congress passed the ERA with a measure that it had to be ratified by the necessary number of states (38) within 7 years. The deadline was ultimately extended an additional three years, but with this narrow and arbitrary time limit, the ERA fell just three states shy of full ratification when the deadline

passed. Other constitutional amendments have been afforded much longer for ratification. One example is the 27th amendment, concerning Congressional pay raises, which was accepted after a 203-year ratification period.

This Congress, I am joined by my colleague Representative CYNTHIA LUMMIS in this important bipartisan effort to finally add women to the Constitution. It is time for our nation to definitively declare that we will not tolerate discrimination against half the population. While we have made cracks in the glass ceiling throughout history, we have yet to shatter it. We believe that this amendment is far more than a symbolic demonstration of equality, but rather would provide protections that are vital to the wellbeing and prosperity of women and their families.

The ERA will ensure all citizens have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Women and men must have equal rights for a democracy to thrive.

The ERA will put women on equal footing in the legal systems of all 50 states, particularly in areas where women have historically been treated as second-class citizens, including in cases of public education, divorce, child custody, domestic violence, and sexual assault.

Passing the ERA will put the full weight of the U.S. Constitution behind employment laws relating to the prevention of sex discrimination in hiring, firing, promotions, and benefits—especially in the public sector.

Pregnancy discrimination continues to be prevalent in the workforce. The ERA can protect women from being harmed by a policy simply because she is a woman.

The 14th amendment is not enough. Only the ERA would provide for gender equity and offer an "overriding guarantee" of equal protection for women.

The ERA would protect the progress made on women's rights from any shifting political trends.

The ERA will ensure that the rights of American women and girls will not be diminished by any Congress or any political trend, but instead be preserved as basic rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution.

Over the past several decades, legislative efforts have aimed to advance the rights of women—but this progress is not irreversible. Without the ERA, women have often been denied the ability to seek justice when they have experienced discrimination. We have seen that constitutional ambiguity on women's rights can have negative consequences when cases that affect the lives of women are brought before the Supreme Court. Until women's equality is clearly acknowledged in our Constitution, half of our population will continue to be without constitutionally guaranteed equality. The time is now to make women's equality a constitutional reality.

Our democracy rests on the principle of "liberty and justice for all." We need the ERA to ensure that this concept applies equally to all.

I am pleased to introduce this bill with 171 of my bipartisan colleagues. I urge my fellow Members of Congress to join in support.

OFFICER BENJAMIN DEEN

HON. STEVEN M. PALAZZO

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 14, 2015

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the bravery, fortitude, and sacrifice demonstrated by Officer Benjamin J. Deen, a member of the Hattiesburg Police Department, who was tragically slain in the line of duty on Saturday, the ninth day of May in the year two thousand and fifteen.

Officer Benjamin J. Deen, known as "B. J.", was thirty-four years old, a resident of Sumrall, Mississippi, and a graduate of Sumrall High School. He was a loving husband to his wife, Robin, and devoted father to his son Walker and daughter Melah. Prior to becoming a police officer, B. J. attended the Mississippi Fire Training Academy and served his community as a firefighter. He later attended the Hattiesburg Police Training Academy and became a patrolman with Hattiesburg Police Force. Deen soon after trained to become a K-9 officer and bonded with Tommy, his K-9 counterpart, who also became a beloved member of the family.

Together, B. J. and Tommy successfully apprehended and arrested numerous drug-related offenders. Officer Deen was not only an exceptional citizen and neighbor, but he chose to live a life of service, stepping into harm's way daily in order to protect his community.

An exceptional member of the force, Deen was named Hattiesburg Police Department's 2012 Officer of the Year. He was an outstanding and respectable man and a valuable asset to the Hattiesburg Police Department, even earning perfect attendance during two of his nearly six years on the force.

The City of Hattiesburg and the Great State of Mississippi have suffered the loss of one of our own: a family member and a protector and defender of our Constitution and laws. Every citizen deeply and sincerely feels the loss of such a devoted law enforcement officer, and his service, heroism, and sacrifice will not be forgotten.

IN RECOGNITION OF NORMAND
DRAPEAU FOR BEING AWARDED
THE CHEVALIER OF THE FRENCH
LEGION OF HONOR

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 14, 2015

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to recognize Normand Drapeau for being awarded the chevalier (knighthood) of the French Legion of Honor by the French Government for his courageous actions while serving in the United States Navy during World War II.

Normand was born on May 1, 1925 in Holyoke, Massachusetts into a large Catholic family as the oldest boy of twelve children. He attended the Immaculate Conception School for his primary education as well as spent a year at LaSalette Seminary in New Hampshire before ultimately deciding to work as a butcher at his family's business, Drapeau's Market. In 1942 on Holy Thursday when he was only seventeen, Normand enlisted in the United